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RESEARCH NOTE NC-26

NORTH CENTRAL FOREST EXPERIMENT STATION, FOREST SERVICE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Lake States Veneer Log Production Shows Increase in 1965

ABSTRACT. — More than 54 million board feet of veneer logs were cut in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin in 1965, the largest cut since 1956. Oak showed the greatest increase. Eighty-seven percent of the total went for wall panels, doors, etc. The rest went into containers.

Loggers in the Lake States[1] cut 54.3 million board feet of veneer logs in 1965. This is the largest harvest on record since 1956 when 79.0 million board feet were cut. The cut of 24.4 million board feet in Wisconsin and 22.3 million board feet in Michigan far surpassed the 7.6 million board feet cut in Minnesota (table 1).

More than four-fifths of the cut was hard maple, birch, oak, elm, and basswood, in that order of volume. With the exception of oak, these species have long been most in demand by the Lake States veneer industry. Only in recent years has oak taken a prominent position in the industry. The increased cut of oak reflects a shift to the use of a more plentiful species. If present cutting trends continue, oak will soon be the volume leader.

Most of the logs, 47.2 million board feet, went to mills cutting standard grade logs into veneer for wall panels, flush doors, specialty plywoods, and other similar items. The remaining 7.1 million board feet went to mills cutting veneer for boxes, baskets, and other types of containers. An additional 2,400 cords of small logs were cut for container mills in the Lake States. Most of this material is sawed into container covers and consists mainly of aspen, elm, and basswood.

Trees having veneer-quality logs are seldom concentrated in one area. Loggers either select veneer logs while cutting for saw logs and other wood products or search for trees having veneer-quality logs. The widely scattered areas of cutting and keen competition for these high-value logs among buyers result in a widespread movement of logs. Buyers for Lake States mills, especially those in Wisconsin, purchased 7.6 million board feet from areas outside the Lake States. Most of these imports were hard maple and yellow birch logs from Canada. A smaller volume composed of several species came primarily from Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa. In turn, buyers for mills outside the Lake States purchased 5.3 million board feet in the Lake States. An estimated 2.7 million board feet went to Indiana, Ohio, and Iowa mills and the remaining 2.6 million board feet to Canada, eastern United States, and Europe. Most of the exported volume was hard maple and walnut.

More Logs Used in Region Than Are Cut

The 48 Lake States mills, 25 container and 23 standard, received 56.6 million board feet of logs in 1965. Their requirements were 2.3 million board feet more than the cut in the region. Mills using standard grade logs received 49.4 million board feet and container

[1] *Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin; future reports will include all states in the North Central Region.*

Table 1. — *Production and imports of veneer logs, Lake States, 1965*
(Thousand board feet, Int'l ¼-inch rule)

Species	Destination	Production[1/]				Imports			Total receipts
		Minn.	Wis.	Mich.	Region	Other[2/]	Canada	Total imports	
Aspen	Minn.	13	-	-	13	-	-	-	13
	Wis.	12	242	20	274	-	-	-	274
	Mich.	-	-	334	334	-	-	-	334
	Total	25	242	354	621	-	-	-	621
Ash	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	131	400	7	538	27	-	27	565
	Mich.	-	7	169	176	-	-	-	176
	Exported[3/]	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-
	Total	131	407	179	717	27	-	27	741
Basswood	Minn.	639	-	-	639	-	-	-	639
	Wis.	1,459	2,562	386	4,407	192	-	192	4,599
	Mich.	-	72	915	987	-	28	28	1,015
	Exported[3/]	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	2,098	2,634	1,301	6,033	192	28	220	6,253
Beech	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	-	81	52	133	-	-	-	133
	Mich.	-	-	370	370	-	-	-	370
	Total	-	81	422	503	-	-	-	503
Birch	Minn.	225	-	-	225	--	4	4	229
	Wis.	427	2,211	4,870	7,508	3	2,268	2,271	9,779
	Mich.	102	255	3,161	3,518	-	969	969	4,487
	Exported[3/]	-	-	396	396	-	-	-	-
	Total	754	2,466	8,427	11,647	3	3,241	3,244	14,495
Cottonwood	Minn.	77	-	-	77	-	-	-	77
	Wis.	936	71	-	1,007	609	-	609	1,616
	Mich.	-	-	358	358	58	-	58	416
	Total	1,013	71	358	1,442	667	-	667	2,109
Elm	Minn.	88	-	-	88	-	-	-	88
	Wis.	1,294	3,899	66	5,259	49	-	49	5,308
	Mich.	-	15	900	915	-	-	-	915
	Exported[3/]	-	77	-	77	-	-	-	-
	Total	1,382	3,991	966	6,339	49	-	49	6,311
Maple, hard	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	458	4,220	2,238	6,916	277	2,466	2,743	9,659
	Mich.	-	245	3,327	3,572	-	-	-	3,572
	Exported[3/]	9	635	1,809	2,453	-	-	-	-
	Total	467	5,100	7,374	12,941	277	2,466	2,743	13,231
Maple, soft	Minn.	31	-	-	31	-	-	-	31
	Wis.	191	1,091	107	1,389	80	-	80	1,469
	Mich.	-	28	337	365	-	-	-	365
	Total	222	1,119	444	1,785	80	-	80	1,865
Oak	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	1,200	7,192	249	8,641	353	47	400	9,041
	Mich.	-	109	150	259	-	-	-	259
	Exported[3/]	-	23	131	154	-	-	-	-
	Total	1,200	7,324	530	9,054	353	47	400	9,300
Walnut	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
	Mich.	-	-	9	9	-	-	-	9
	Exported[3/]	99	134	1,636	1,869	-	-	-	-
	Total	99	135	1,645	1,879	-	-	-	10
Misc. species	Minn.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Wis.	3	577	49	629	31	-	31	660
	Mich.	-	74	314	388	122	-	122	510
	Exported[3/]	173	184	4	361	-	-	-	-
	Total	176	835	367	1,378	153	-	153	1,170
All species	Minn.	1,073	-	-	1,073	-	4	4	1,077
	Wis.	6,111	22,547	8,044	36,702	1,621	4,781	6,402	43,104
	Mich.	102	805	10,344	11,251	180	997	1,177	12,428
	Exported[3/]	281	1,053	3,979	5,313	-	-	-	-
	Total	7,567	24,405	22,367	54,339	1,801	5,782	7,583	56,609

1/ Vertical columns of figures under box heading "Production" represents the quantity of veneer logs cut in each state.

2/ Central States and small amounts from more distant states.

3/ Veneer logs shipped to mills outside Lake States Region.

mills the remaining 7.2 million board feet. Wisconsin mills, the principal consumers, received 43.1 million board feet. Their needs far exceeded Michigan and Minnesota mills which used 12.4 and 1.1 million board feet, respectively.

Trends in Production Indicate Possible Up-swing

The volume cut in 1965 is the largest in recent years. Future reports on the industry will show whether the increase indicates an upward trend or merely reflects one of the better years in the industry. Partially due to loss of defense contracts, standard grade log production dropped sharply in the late 1940's (fig. 1). Since 1950, production has averaged about 46 million board feet annually. Veneer quality logs are in shorter supply, but improved technology in utilization and continued demand for hardwood veneer have kept this market active. Container veneer log production declined generally from the mid 1940's until 1960. During this time, less costly paperboard and plastic containers made deep inroads in the veneer container market. Since 1960, production has been maintained at 6 to 8 million board feet annually. This indicates the market for veneer containers has apparently stabilized.

Thanks are due the veneer industry in the Lake States and adjacent states for supplying the data in this report. Other sources of information, such as the Department of Commerce, provided an estimate of veneer logs shipped to more distant states and overseas.

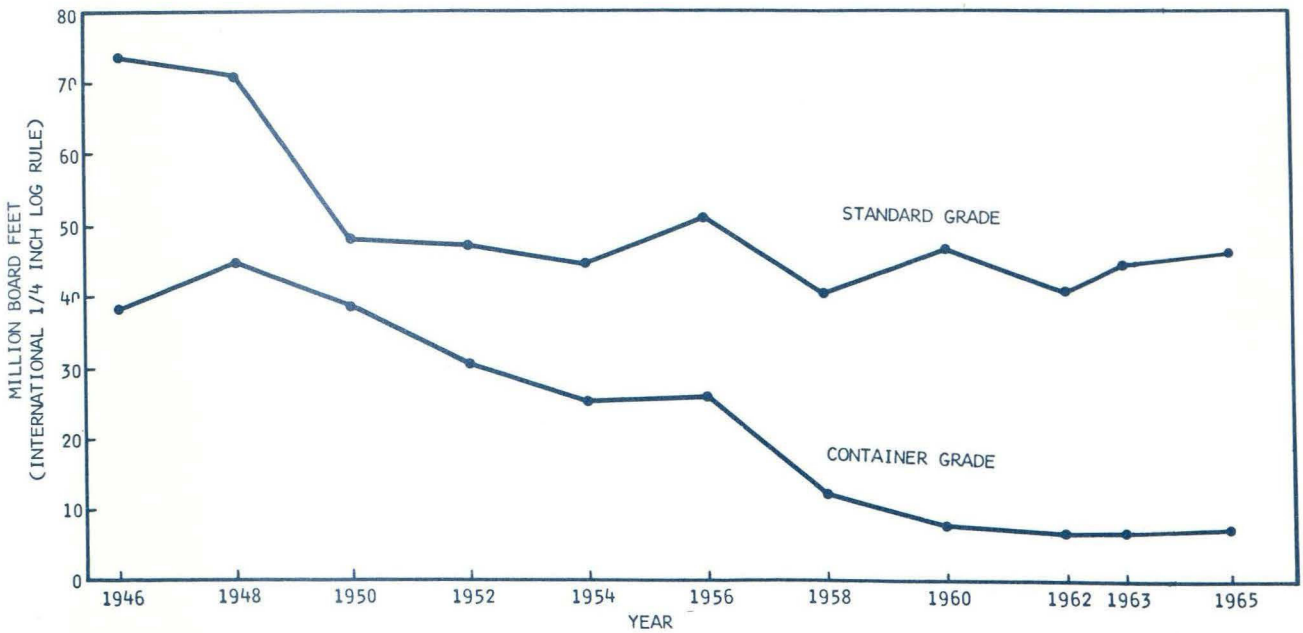

Figure 1.—Veneer log production, Lake States, 1946-1965.

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